

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /067 W

-----091200Z 012207 /22

R 091043Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2596

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL KERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DAMASCUS 2281

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, IS

SUBJECT: INITIAL SYRIAN PRESS REACTION TO RABIN RESIGNATION
SUGGESTS IT FURTHER DELAYING TACTIC

1. APRIL 9 AL-THAWRAH CONTAINED FRONT-PAGE COLUMN
BE EDITOR ALI SULAYMAN ENTITLED, "WHAT LIES BEHIND
SUDDEN RESIGNATION OF RABIN?" SULAYMAN OPINED THAT,
"NO MATTER WHAT ARE CONCLUSIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS
OF RABIN'S SUDDEN RESIGNATION, ITS RELATIONSHIP TO
ME CRISIS EXCEEDS ANY OTHER REASONS." HE WENT ON TO
ASSERT THAT IT WAS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF "ISRAELI
PERSISTENCE TO GAIN TIME AND REMAIN IN OCCUPATION OF
ARAB TERRITORIES BY CREATING NEW CIRCUMSTANCES."
SULAYMAN CONCLUDED THAT, "UNDOUBTEDLY TIME WILL
UNCOVER REAL REASONS BEHIND RABIN'S SUDDEN RESIGNA-
TION."

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2. AL-THAWRAH COUNIST DWELT ON COMPARISON BETWEEN
RABIN'S RESIGNATION AND WATERGATE SCANDAL. IN HIS VIEW,
"IDENTIFICATION BETWEEN NIXON AND RABIN IS DEMONSTRATION
THAT THEY ATTACHED THEMSELVES TO DEMOCRACIES
WHICH DREW TIRED OF THEIR INDULGENCE IN TRIVIALITIES."
HE CONCLUDED THAT RABIN'S FATE "SPARES US TROUBLE OF
PREDICTING POLITICAL FUTURE OF PARTIES LED BY TERRORISTS

LIKE PERES OR BEGIN BECAUSE THEY (THE PARTIES) POSSESS
ABUNDANT CAPACITY FOR CORRUPTION."

3. COMMENT: SULAYMAN'S COLUMN CAREFULLY DRAWN TO
EMPHASIZE THAT ISSUES OTHER THAN PRIMIN RABIN'S
FINANCIAL TRANSGRESSIONS EXPLAIN HIS DOWNFALL. TO
SOME EXTENT, THEI REFLECTS NORMAL SYRIAN PREDILECTION
TO VIEW ISRAELI ACTIVITIES THROUGH PRISM OF ARAB-
ISRAELI CONFLICT. ON MORE SUBTLE LEVEL, SULAYMAN'S
THESIS PERHAPS INTENDED TO CONTAIN POTENTIAL DAMAGE
RESULTING FROM SPILLOVER EFFECT INTO SYRIA OF RESIGNA-
TION. OFFICIAL CORRUPTION IS CHARGE WHICH HAS BEEN
LEVIED AGAINST THIS REGIME FOR SOME TIME, AND ISSUE
CONTINUES TO FESTER ALTHOUGH IT IS RARELY AMPLIFIED
PUBLICLY. RABIN'S DEPARTURE FOLLOWING HIS SUCCESS-
FUL REBUFF TO PERES FOR ALIGNMENT CANDIDACY AND
IN MIDST OF SENSITIVE DISCUSSIONS AIMED AT GENERATING
PROGRESS TOWARD ME SETTLEMENT ON ISSUE OF MAINTAINING
FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNTS MAY STRIKE MANY SYRIANS AS
QUITE A CONTRAST TO ACTIVITIES OF THEIR OWN GOVT.
OPEN STATEMENT BY AL-THAWRAH COLUMNIST THAT CORRUPT
OFFICEHOLDERS ULTIMATELY LOSE THEIR JOBS MAY LEAVE
MANY IN SARG UNCOMFORTABLE WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS.

4. BE THAT AS IT MAY, MOST SYRIANS WE BELIEVE ARE
SIMPLY UNABLE TO COMPREHEND THAT A POLITICAL LEADER
WOULD RESIGN OVER WHAT THEY CAN ONLY REGARD AS TRIVIAL
MALFEASANCE. THIS REINFORCES THEIR SUSPICIONS THAT
THE RESIGNATION IS A PRETEXT, AIMED AT FURTHER POST-
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PONING NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A PEACE SETTLEMENT.
MURPHY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Sent Date: 09-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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